

EXHIBIT 5

Petra Beter Blackmail! Bloomberg for A a sexual assault

Petra Beter allegedly tried to shake down Mayor Bloomberg over a sex-assault claim against Duane Baughman, a consultant during his 2001 campaign



The feds are investigating allegations that Mayor Bloomberg was the target of a multimillion-dollar blackmail bid by a former worker who wildly claims she was sexually assaulted by his consultant in front of his top aide, The Post has learned.

The woman, Petra Beter, a photographer hired by Bloomberg's first election campaign in 2001, never filed a police report or lawsuit over the alleged '01 incident, although she repeatedly threatened the mayor's office to go public, sources said.

Instead, Beter, 37, made the allegation known only to several people in 2005 — in a move designed to net her more than \$220 million, Bloomberg's camp says.

The shutterbug claimed that high-powered consultant Duane Baughman tried to force himself on her in a kitchen area at Bloomberg's campaign headquarters in Midtown.

Beter also alleged Bloomberg's former right-hand man, Ed Skyler, 38 — now a top executive at Citigroup — witnessed the incident and did nothing.

Skyler, through Bloomberg lawyer Tom Golden, yesterday blasted the allegation as "entirely implausible."

"To allege a sexual assault occurred in an open space where dozens of people were working, never report it to the police and then threaten to publicize the claim seven years later unless millions of dollars were paid lacks even the slightest shred of credibility," he said.

But Beter said she didn't say anything at the time because she didn't want to lose her job. She said that

after she later told another Bloomberg honcho, she said they dangled a job offer, although nothing came of it.

Finally, in 2005, Beter had a lawyer fire off a letter to Baughman and the mayor's lawyers claiming that Bloomberg's re-election campaign reused photos she took in '01 without permission.

Her lawyer slipped in the sex allegation by writing, "Although I am advised that my client was severely traumatized as a result of having been sexually assaulted . . . in September 2001, she is quite certain in her memory that she did not grant your company, Mayor Bloomberg or his campaign the right to use her photographs."

That letter concluded with a demand for "in excess of \$1 million," which it says is for the alleged copyright infringement.

The dough was never sent.

For the next two years, Beter and her sister, Josee, pressed Bloomberg's circle for money, the mayor's lawyer said.

The mayor was reluctant to report the Beters to the authorities, his lawyer said.

The decision to contact the feds was finally made in October 2008, after the Beter sisters sent e-mails discussing the incident and Skyler, Bloomberg and Baughman to key people on Hillary Clinton's presidential campaign.

Baughman was working for Clinton at the time.

At one point, Beter's lawyer, Neal Brickman, who has a history of going after the mayor and the company he founded, Bloomberg LP, drafted a "lawsuit" over the alleged assault and showed it to Bloomberg's lawyers.

The draft demanded \$221 million as it accused the mayor, Skyler and a cast of others of "continuing actions to conceal" the '01 assault and "breach of duty" by not reporting the incident.

Bloomberg's camp notified the Manhattan US Attorney's Office.

"For several years, these two individuals attempted to extort the mayor . . . In response, we referred this scheme to the US Attorney's Office," Bloomberg spokesman Howard Wolfson told The Post.

Ellen Davis, a spokeswoman for the office, confirmed the ongoing probe into the alleged extortion.

"We investigate every case that is brought to our attention thoroughly," she said.

After learning of the probe, Beter dropped off the radar.

The Beters did turn up once, in October 2010, when the sisters and their mother were evicted in a headline-grabbing incident at a luxury hotel in Minneapolis.

They had been holed up at the Hotel Ivy for 16 months without paying their \$239,000 bill, according to police records.

As the sisters and their mother were being taken out of the building, Petra Beter attempted to slit her wrists and was briefly hospitalized afterward.

Beter, who talked to The Post, also claimed what had been a flirtatious relationship of e-mails and phone calls between her and Skyler turned sexual during a weekend tryst in Florida in 2004.

Beter said the sex was consensual but considered it part of an effort to keep her quiet.

The unmarried Skyler declined to comment on whether he had a romantic relationship with Beter.

Baughman referred calls to his lawyer, who did not respond to a request for comment.

Brickman denies any extortion attempt and said the federal probe is simply Bloomberg's camp manipulating "the criminal-justice system for the purpose of intimidating."